

# WATER MATTERS

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What makes Tucson such a water-smart community? It's a conservation ethic with roots in the 1970s. Find out more.

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*A proud part of the City of Tucson*



# WORKING

# WITH WATER



With Lake Mead and Colorado River shortages in the news, you might wonder **why is our community not discussing water use restrictions?** Here's one answer:

Tucsonans have embraced water conservation for more than a generation.

If you lived in Tucson before 1980, you might remember an urban landscape of grass lawns and other high water use plants lining residential streets—requiring large amounts of water to survive. Tucson was solely dependent on water pumped from our aquifer, and high demand was causing groundwater levels to plummet.

**In 1977, Tucson Water launched the “Beat the Peak” campaign** aimed at persuading residents to water their lawns and landscapes less and only during off-peak times. The utility also implemented community conservation education and began offering rebates to encourage customers to make water-saving changes to their homes.

At that time, Tucson Water also adopted a progressive water rate structure that provides an incentive for customers to conserve.

Like the desert dwellers they are, **Tucsonans responded.** Since 1980 per capita water use has dropped 33%, from about 180 gallons per person per day to less than 120. As a result, Tucson uses the same amount of drinking water as it did 35 years ago even though the population has grown by more than 40 percent. Our community's water use continues to decline even as our economy and population has grown. Today we are one of the most water-efficient communities in the West.

CALL

Public Information  
English & Español:  
(520) 791-4331

CLICK

[tucsonaz.gov/  
water](http://tucsonaz.gov/water)

SOCIAL



TDD

(520) 791-2639

WATCH



**PETE THE BEAK** is Tucson Water's spokes-duck and mascot for water conservation, and the star of the utility's *Beat the Peak* campaign. Pete's early *Beat the Peak* role was during high water demand summer months, educating water customers about the benefits of "Never water between 4-8, and only every other day." The *Beat the Peak* program was the most successful peak management program in the nation. Today, Pete focuses on teaching about year-round water efficiency, appearing at schools and special events.



### Another reason:

Tucson is well positioned to respond to changes in Colorado River flow — Tucson Water has focused on ensuring diverse sources of supply for our water future.

In 1984, we built the "purple pipes" system to serve recycled water initially to golf courses and later to other large irrigators like schools and parks.

In the 2000s, Tucson Water invested in the massive Clearwater Renewable Resource Facility, one of the nation's leading systems for storing surface water in a natural aquifer. This has allowed us to



store our unused Colorado River water—over 16 billion gallons, half a year's demand each year—in the ground for future use. This also means that when we conserve water as a community, it doesn't get used by another community or user. Rather, it is stored in local aquifers for later use.

Drought is a normal occurrence in our desert environment. Tucsonans have done a great job in adapting to that reality over the past few decades, using water ever more wisely even as our population and economy have grown and our quality of life has improved.

**Our work isn't done.** Conservation and efficient use of water will continue to play an important role especially as we face a changing climate. There are still steps each of us can take to use water more efficiently and reduce waste. Tucson Water will continue to offer rebates and incentives to support those steps.

When it comes to preparing for drought:  
Keep up the good work, Tucson!

# 5 *easy steps*

## TO USE WATER MORE EFFICIENTLY AT HOME



### **FIX LEAKY TOILETS**

*save up to*

**50-100+ GALLONS**

per toilet/day

### **TURN OFF WATER WHEN BRUSHING TEETH**

*save*

**10 GALLONS**

per person/day



### **WASH ONLY A FULL LOAD OF CLOTHES**

*save*

**15-45 GALLONS**

per load

### **TAKE FIVE-MINUTE SHOWERS INSTEAD OF TEN-MINUTE SHOWERS**

*save up to*

**15 GALLONS**

per person/day



### **INSTALL A HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOILET**

(1.28 GALLON PER FLUSH)

*save*

**10-20 GALLONS**

per person/day

For more water-saving steps, rebates, incentives,  
& more: [tucsonaz.gov/water/conservation](http://tucsonaz.gov/water/conservation)

## CITY OF TUCSON ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

On-Sale Now

**Affordable Recycled EcoPaint**

Each year, the City of Tucson Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program receives and recycles more than 25,000 pounds of unused paint in partnership with the Beacon Foundation. **This latex EcoPaint is 100% recycled and for sale at a reduced price.** It's also EPA-compliant and useable indoors or out.



**Purchase EcoPaint at the Beacon Paint Center,  
2700 N. Stone Ave, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.  
Find out more at [beaongroup.org](http://beaongroup.org).**

Use EcoPaint, keep reusable paint out of the landfill, and support employment and training for people with disabilities.

## PIMA COUNTY WASTEWATER RECLAMATION

**14th Annual Grease Collection  
and Recycling Event was a Success!**

The Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department and its partners want to thank the community for the successful collection of **8,700** pounds of fats, oils, and grease (**FOG**).

Your participation not only assists in keeping **FOG** out of our sewers, but the amount collected reduces our carbon footprint by **22,000** pounds when recycled into biodiesel, a cleaner burning fuel than regular diesel.

If you missed this event, we have a year-round grease collection location listed below:

**Agua Nueva Water Reclamation Facility**

2947 W. Calle Agua Nueva • Tucson, AZ 85745

Monday – Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



For more information contact **(520) 405-0438** or visit [www.pima.gov/grease](http://www.pima.gov/grease).



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Nextdoor

**Your utilities services statement includes fees for your water, environmental services, and wastewater.**

**Environmental Services (ES)** (520) 791-3171 or visit [tucsonaz.gov/environmental-services](http://tucsonaz.gov/environmental-services)

**Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (PCRWRD)** (520) 724-6609 or visit [pima.gov/wastewaterreclamation](http://pima.gov/wastewaterreclamation)